



October 9, 2009

Dear Delegates and Clergy,

The church is all about community, and when we gather for Diocesan Convention on Nov. 6-7 at Trinity Church in Boston, we will be celebrating 225 years of life in community together as the Episcopal Diocese of Massachusetts.

We will engage with critical issues during optional Friday lunchtime conversations; through discussion of our diocesan budget and resolutions; and in conversation about recent General Convention actions.

Our worship will take us from 1784 Morning Prayer to our current *Book of Common Prayer* and beyond, blending music from our many traditions. It will be hard to leave without a new idea to try out back home.

And, we will celebrate under a big tent on Copley Plaza, with a Copley Square Dance on Friday night, featuring a barbecue dinner, live music and dancing and an auction, with proceeds to benefit our young adult intern programs. (*Don't forget to bring to Convention your congregation's special offering to supplement the auction proceeds!*) On Saturday afternoon, while the work of Convention continues inside the church, youth of our diocese will gather in the tent with Bishop Tom for a special celebration and then join us for our closing Eucharist.

Along with encouraging your youth and youth leaders to sign up for the youth rally, we hope you will bring several nonvoting parish leaders to take part in Convention with you. We commend the enclosed materials for your review, and encourage you to come to a pre-convention forum to further prepare for the business at hand.

Convention is the one occasion when all our congregations, through your representation, are present together in prayer and worship, celebration and deliberation, discernment and lifting up of a common vision for the glory of God and God's kingdom. And then we take it all home to our congregations where our shared mission to be Christ's inviting, forming, sending and serving presence in the world finds local expression. This building up of community life has been a primary vocation for leaders in the church since her beginning. You share in that vocation. Your presence and participation in Convention is holy work, and we give thanks to God for your offering of yourself and for the opportunity to serve alongside you.

We're going to have a lot of fun. We'll see you there.

Faithfully yours,

The Rt. Rev. M. Thomas Shaw, SSJE

The Rt. Rev. Bud Cederholm

The Rt. Rev. Gayle E. Harris